THE

Dramatic and Literary Cenſor.

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MEMOIRS OF MRS. BILLINGTON.

THE return of this accompliſhed lady to her native country, and her re-appearance on the metropolitan ſtage, after an abſence of ſeven years, during which period ſhe has ſucceſsfully cultivated the ſcience, of which ſhe is ſo bright an ornament, in the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſchools of Italy, (that "parent ſoil of harmony," as it has juſtly been ſtyled) muſt neceſſarily render a memoir of her life an acceptable offering to our readers.

Her muſical talents appear to be hereditary. Mr. Weichſell, her father, was by birth a German, who came over to this country in hopes of profeſſional advancement, and was eſteemed a very able maſter of the ſcience. Her mother was equally diſtinguiſhed, as a ſinger, and performed in that capacity, among other public places, at Vauxhall Gardens, where ſhe was greatly admired. Their daughter, the ſubject of our preſent memoir, gave evidence at a very early age, of aſtoniſhing muſical genius, which determined her parents to educate her for public life. The attention they beſtowed upon her inſtruction was amply repaid by the rapidity, almoſt to a miracle, of her improvement. When ſcarcely eleven years old, Mrs. Billington played a concerto on the

harpſichord in the public rooms, at Bath. This we believe, was her firſt public eſſay. Two or three years after ſhe aſſiſted at a benefit concert for her mother, at the Haymarket Theatre.

But if the precocity of her muſical talents aſtoniſhed the world, ſhe was equally early and premature in other of Nature's gifts. Ere yet ſhe had entered her *teens*, her boſom confeſſed the warm glow of paſſion, and her eyes teſtified that if muſic be, as Poets tell us,* "the food of love," ſhe had fed plentifully on the banquet, and was ripe for joy. That joy was early realiſed. At the tender age of fourteen, ſhe entered the holy ſtate of matrimony with her late huſband, Mr. Billington, who being a profeſſional man, had like herſelf, it is preſumed, regaled on *love's choſen food*, and was duly qualified to miniſter at the altar.

Hitherto Mrs. Billington had confined the exerciſe of her talents chiefly to concert ſinging. But the ſtage preſenting faiter proſpects of permanent advantage, ſhe entered into articles with Mr. Daly, the Dublin Manager, by whom her huſband, likewiſe, was engaged as an aſſiſtant in the Orcheſtra.

We enter now upon a very buſy and momentous ſcene of our heroine's life. Tranſplanted into the very *hot-bed* of gallantry, whilſt yet a giddy, inexperienced girl, with all her paſſions on the ſtretch,—herſelf feelingly alive to the warm impulſe of deſire, and formed to kindle a correſpondent flame in the breaſt of others, with a pleaſing perſon and a faſcinating voice, ſhe ſoon became the object of general notice, and was purſued by the leading gallants of the day, with all the ardour which forms the prominent and leading *trait* in the character of our Hibernian neighbours. Mrs. Billington was not of a conſtitution to reſiſt ſuch eager and aſſidious

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* Muſic rules the world above;
Muſic is the food of love.

See Firſt Pythian Ode of PINDAR.

aſſidious importunities, compoſed of moſt combuſtible materials, ſhe readily caught the ſpark, and burſt into full and inſtant blaze.

Knowing, as we do, from ſad experience, the weakneſs and fallibility of human nature, and to what a ſuperior degree the beſt diſpoſitions are moſt impetuouſly inclined to certain frailties from which ſordid, ſelfiſh, groveling minds have little temptation to apprehend, we would rather kindly cover than wantonly expoſe, errors, which have their ſource in phyſical cauſes. Thrown into the vortex of diſſipation at an age, when the immature judgment is ill competent to curb the wild ſallies of paſſion; if Mrs. Billington fell under the mighty ſtruggle, ſhe is rather to be pitied than cenſured—her faults rather extenuated than aggravated. That very refinement, and ſupreme ſenſibility, which the mind acquires from cultivation, renders the individual doubly perceptible of tender ſenſations, and in this point of view, places public characters in a ſituation peculiarly critical and obnoxious to falling.

One inadvertancy naturally paves the way to another.—The road of error is downward, and of eaſy deſcent—"*Omne nefas in proclive*". Too much depends, in the economy of a Theatre, upon intrigue. Among other gallants, who paid their addreſſes to Mrs. Billington, was D—, the Manager. The frequent opportunities, which his official ſituation afforded him of holding private converſe with our heroine, were too propitious for ſcenes of amorous dalliance, not to be employed for that purpoſe. But not being ſufficiently cautious in the proſecution of their amours, the jealouſy of Mrs. D—, was aroused. Detection ſoon followed—Watching the loving couple as they repaired to one of the dreſſing-rooms, Mrs. D— darting her inquiſitive eye through the key-hole of the door, had occular conviction of the juſtice of her ſuſpicions. Inſtead, of breaking in upon the parties, and diſturbing them in their private rehearſals, ſhe went in ſearch of Mr. B————, who through the ſame convenience of the key-hole, became a

joint-witneſs of the delectable ſcene. Two or three more perſons were admitted to a participation in the proſpect, with a view of making uſe of their evidence in a legal inveſtigation.

A proſecution for criminal converſation was now threatened, and proceedings actually commenced. But the wily Manager, working in concert with the lady, completed *outmanœuvred* his antagoniſt. The lady, on her part, vowed and proteſted moſt ſolemnly, that ſhe would totally withdraw herſelf from the ſtage, if the buſineſs was brought before a Court of Juſtice—and the Manager, in his turn, menaced the huſband with an action for damages to the amount of 500l. in caſe his wife did not fulfill her engagements with the Theatre; that ſum being the penalty attached, by bond, to the forfeiture of her articles. Thus circumſtanced, and well aware of the rigid ſcrutiny made into character on theſe occaſions, by the ſage expounders and adminiſtrators of the law, Mr. B———— thought it moſt adviſeable to diſcontiuue his ſuit, and once more received his loving ſpouſe into favour.

The high hand, with which our heroine carried it over her lord and maſter, in the above inſtance, rendered her even leſs reſerved and circumſpect, than ſhe before had been, in the proſecution of her intrigues. An intimacy not very clandeſtinely conducted, in which a late Duke of *convivial* memory, at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, acted a principal part, gave great and general umbrage, the conſort of her noble paramour, being not leſs juſtly than univerſally eſteemed and beloved by all ranks of Society. Finding her popularity rapidly declining (for to the honour of the Iriſh character, we will aſſert that, however ſtrongly addicted, they may be to the purſuits of gallantry, no nation on the face of the globe are more tenacious of moral rectitude and purity in others) ſhe reſolved to quit the Dublin ſtage, and try her fortune on the London boards.

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On the recommendation of her friend, the Iriſh Viceroy, the Marquis of Carmarthen, at that time pincipal Secretary of State, warmly eſpouſed her intereſt, and ſo ſtrenuouſly exerted his powerful influence in her favour, that he procured her the high and diſtinguiſhed, if not altogether unprecedented, honour of making her *debut* at Covent garden theatre, in a play by expreſs ROYAL COMMAND! She made her firſt appearance on the Metropolitan Stage, as an actreſs, Feburary. 13, 1786, in the part of *Rofetta*, in Bickerſtaffe's Comic Opera of *Love in a Village*.

This extraordinary mark of Royal Patronage at once ſtamped her fame, and gave her a degree of conſequence in the faſhionable world, which to a performer, canvaſſing for public favour, is a conſideration of the utmoſt value and importance. A *debut* under ſuch circumſtances is, of itſelf-competent to enſure ſucceſs, even to a moderate diſplay of talent; but where the ſanction of Royalty co-operates with abilities of a ſuperior caſt, as in the preſent inſtance, a double degree of celebrity may juſtly be expected.

Mrs Billington went through the cuſtomery range of operatical characters, ſuch as *Clara*, in the *Duenna*; *Polly*, in the *Beggar's Opera*; *Fanny*, in the *Maid of the Mill* &c. with increaſing reputation, making with each repeated performance, rapid advance in the favour of the public. In the ſummer of the firſt ſeaſon of her engagement at Covent Garden, ſhe made a trip to Italy and France, accompanied by the celebrated *Sacchini*, from which ſhe reaped much profeſſional improvement.

We paſs over her gallantries, for which ſhe was not leſs diſtinguiſhed in this country, than ſhe had been in Ireland, as unfit topics for public animadverſion. Certain conſtitutions are ſo critically formed, compounded and attempered, that we might as ſoon look for *warmth* in an *icicle*, as for immaculate purity in their deportment. The ſtrong tendency of muſic &c. to a rouze and ſtimulate the paſſions—to exempt them from Reaſon's control—to render the feelings independant of the judgment, and attune the ſoul

to the perception of tender ſenſations, we have already adequately commented upon. With the *male* ſex, indeed there are certain contingencies, connected with the profeſſion of a *ſinger*, which rather operate to deaden ſenſation, and induce a *torpor* in the animal ſyſtem—but this is not the caſe with the *female* world. Their feelings are kept in a ſtate of continual irritation, and the public opportunities they enjoy of diſplaying their proficiency in the very ſcience, which lays them open to temptation, renders them, in exactly the ſame proportion, objects of public and general purſuit. Hence ſome Philoſophers, and thoſe men of no mean attainment and note, are of opinion, that the progreſs of an individual, in the ſcience of muſic, particularly in the caſe of *female* profeſſors, may be calculated and appreciated by the voracity, as to degree, of carnal appetite.

The faſt hold, which our heroine made on the public approbation, ſhe retained for a ſeries of years with undiminiſhed force. Her ſcientific performance charmed the *connoiſſeur*, at the ſame time that the native ſweetneſs of her voice, and her pleaſing manner gave general ſatisfaction to the leſs refined feelings of John Bull himſelf. From *her*, nothing failed to pleaſe; and many old airs, which long had loſt their attractions, acquired, when given by *her*, new charms and graces.

Stimulated by the laudable thirſt of improvement, and the generous ambition of proving to the world, that Engliſh talent is capable of attaining to as high a pitch of excellence and perfection, as that of any other country, ſhe reſolved upon another viſit to Italy, where ſhe has ſince taken up a long abode. She was accompanied in her excurſion by her huſband, whoſe preſence however (ſo convenient and mutually accomodating were their domeſtic arrangements) proved no check upon the free indulgence of her inclinations.

In Italy, ſhe appears to have given free and uncontrolled ſcope to the gratification of her deſires. Though the name of Mrs. Billington has for nearly 20 years been familiar to

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the public, as a profeſſional character, it ſhould be remembered that ſhe is ſtill, even at the preſent moment, young—having commenced her profeſſional career at a very early age. She is not thirty-five years old; though probably, to adopt the language of *Lingo*, iu the *Agreeable Surpriſe*, ſhe has ſeen and knows more of "men and things," than any of her ſex, who have lived twice her time in the world.—Among o her gallants of notori ty, her name has been frequently aſſociated with that of a high Church Dignitary, not long ſince returned to this country, who paid her marked and very peculiar attention. With this Reverend Father in God, ſhe was wont to paſs a conſiderable portion of her leiſure hours, which, if we may credit report; were moſt piouſly employed in conning over the beauties of *Solomon's Song*. This circumſtance, however, we ſtate with conſiderable diffidence, as it reſts entirely on rumour, or at leaſt is not ſubſtantiated as a fact, by any mode of legal proof. His Lordſhip is known to poſſeſs a ſtrong taſte for muſic, particularly vocal performance, and to this paſſion, no doubt, his acquaintance with our heroine is to be principally, if not entirely attributed.

She loſt her huſband, by ſudden death at Naples. They had dined together, in company with her *Clerical Friend*, at his Lordſhip'e hotel, when Mr. Billington, ſhortly after riſing from table, had the misfortune to burſt a blood veſſel in the brain, which produced inſtant diſſolution. Thus releaſed from the ſhackles of Hymen, our heroine was left at full liberty to follow the unbiaſſed bent of her own inclinations.

Of her profeſſional improvement during her long abode in Italy, we cannot ſpeak in terms of too high panegyric. She ſoon eſtabliſhed her ſuperiority, as a ſinger, not only over thoſe of her own country, but even over the moſt favourite and admired adepts of the Italian ſchool. Wherever ſhe diſplayed her powers, particularly at Naples, Florence, Milan, &c. ſhe was univerſally regarded as the wonder of the day. The writer of this article has converſed with ſeveral diſtinguiſhed *connoiſſeurs*, who have witneſſed her per-

performances

performance abroad; all of whom agree in the ſtatement above laid down, and pronounce her, not only the firſt of Engliſh ſingers; but without exception, the very firſt female finger in Europe. The compaſs of her voice is wonderfully improved ſince her leaving England her tones are at once clear, powerful, ſweet; and capable of the moſt varied modulation. Previous to her departure from this country, her lower notes were deemed not ſo perfect as her upper tones. But this deficiency is now totally removed. In the *Bravura*, ſhe ſurpaſſes even the celebrated *Mara*. With her excellence in plaintive melodies, which charm and captivate the heart by their beautiful ſimplicity, the *amateurs* of this country and our readers, in general, have long been acquainted. But we ſhall expatiate more fully on her profeſſional qualifications, in our next, when we enter on the detail of her performance in Arne's beautiful Opera of *Artaxerxes*, which is the only legitimate Engliſh Opera this countary can boaſt. As we know the inveterate diſpoſition of mankind, to raiſe and extol the reputation of *departed* talents at the expence of the *living*,

"nifi quæ terris ſemota, ſuriſque,
"Temporibus disjuncta videt, faſtidut, et odit."

we naturally expect to hear a long ſeries of fulſome declamation, both on the ſuperior manner, in which this Opera was got up, on its *original* repreſentation, and the ſuperior effect it produced. In anticipation of ſuch ſapient remarks, as theſe, it may be proper to obſerve, in proof that the eventual falling off of the intereſt of this Opera cannot derogate, in the ſmalleſt degree, from the tranſcendant powers and talents of *Mrs. Billington*, that *Artaxerxes*, even with all the charms of *novelty*, and however powerfully ſupported, was not performed more than *nine times* during the firſt ſeaſon of its production. And be further remembered, as a proof, that it did not owe even *nine* rep reſentations to its *intrinſic* att r actions, that out of theſe *nine* repetitions, it was *once* ordered by ROYAL COMMAND, and performed *once*, for the benefit of Miſs BRENT.

(To be Continued.)

THEATRICAL RETROSPECT.

HAVING been induced by the earnest and repeated applications of a conſiderable number of our readers, as well as ſeveral literary characters, to convert the DRAMATIC and LITERARY CENSOR, from a MONTHLY into a WEEKLY Publication, we ſhall now have it in our power, in the ſucceeding Numbers of this work, to enter more fully into the detail of the individual performances of the evening. Yet, though we deſign to notice every occurrence of worth and moment, it is not our intention to fritter away the energies of criticiſm, by deſcanting on trifles, and gauging the dimenſions and capacity of valets, lacquies, chamber-maids, &c. Neither ſhall we, on every repetition of the ſame play new diſh-up and preſent to our readers, as a freſh bill of fare, the animadverſions, which have already been offered to his acceptance, on the previous repreſentation. We ſhall rather endeavour to ſeize on prominent objects, and direct our attention to the delineation of leading and characteriſtic *traits*.

In this view, as the very nature of the work on which we are engaged, muſt neceſſarily lead to a frequent recurrence of the ſame ſcenes and tranſactions, we ſhall, when objects of primary conſideration crowd and multiply upon us, as will occaſionally happen, have recourſe to ſelection, and take them in rotation. Thus, in the preſent inſtance, we ſhall not enlarge on what may be ſtyled the *ſtock* performances of both houſes, the public attention being more imperiouſly called to an event, which has for months engroſſed the converſation of the town—we allude to the re-appearance of Mrs. BILLINGTON. On this ſubject, therefore, we ſhall be more diffuſe, and devote to the diſcuſſion a greater proportion of our pages—reſerving to a

future opportunity the conſideration of minor claims, many of which have already been ſufficiently canvaſſed and adjuſted.

Inſtead of filling up our publication, for want of better matter, with a *Copy of the Play-Bills*, which when both houſes open nightly, would occupy *three fourths* of our work, i. e. *twelve* pages out of *ſixteen!*—and charging our readers *two ſhillings*, per month, for an article, *no longer of uſe*—which might be purchaſed, for *nightly convenience, at the ſame expence!*—we prefer an adherence to our old plan of giving a ſpecification of each night, by which practice we ſhall enjoy greater ſcope and latitude for critical enquiry.

DRURY-LANE.

1801. SEPTEMBER.

Saturday, 26. The Rivals, *R. B. Sheridan*—Lodoiſka, *J. P. Kemble.*

Tuesday, 29. Richard the Third, *Shakspeare*—Blue Beard, *G. Colman.*

OCTOBER.

Thurſday, 1. The Clandeſtine Marriage, *Colman*, and *Garrick.* The Deſerter, *C. Dibdin.*

Saturday, 3. The Merchant of Venice, *Shakſpeare*—Blue-Beard, *G. Colman.*

Monday, 5. George Barnwell, *G. Lillo.*-Lodoiſka, *J. P. Kemble.*

Tueſday, 6. Richard the Third, *Shakſpeare.*—Blue Beard, *G. Colman.*

For the reaſons already aſſigned,—with the exception of Mr. Kemble's *Richard*, which will form the object of ſeparate diſcuſſion—we ſhall poſtpone our remarks on the performances ſpecified in the above liſt to a future opportunity. Procraſtination may, indeed, on this occaſion be reſorted to, with

with the greater juſtice and expediency, as the general character, as well of the dramas themſelves, as of the repreſentatives of the different parts, has been amply analiſed in the preceding numbers of this work. The only topics, therefore, on which it appears neceſſary for us to deſcant, in the preſent inſtance, are

Firſt, the abſence of

MR. WEWITZER;

In the line of foreigners, ſuch as Swiſs and German characters in the lower walks of life, the merit of this Gentleman has long been univerſally acknowledged, and may, indeed, be ſaid to ſtand unrivalled. It is, therefore, with the greater aſtoniſhment and regret, that we do not meet with his name on the muſter roll of the Drury-lane *corps*. From what cauſe and motive his reſignation or diſcharge may have originated, it is not for us to determine—but truth compels us to obſerve, that Mr. Maddocks, who has this ſeaſon ſtept forward as his proxy, in the part of *Hans Molkus*, in the muſical entertainment of *Age To-Morrow*—and that of *Canton*, in the *Clandeſtine Marriage*, is by no means an adequate ſubſtitute for his predeceſſor. To his foreign extraction, doubtleſs, Mr. Wewitzer ſtands in a great meaſure indebted for his peculiar excellence in this line:—his abſence we conſider as a ſerious loſs, and flatter ourſelves that all thoſe of our readers, who have witneſſed his *Canton*, his *Papillion*, *his Solomon*, in the *Stranger*, with other characters of a ſimilar deſcription, will cheerfully concur with up in the opinion.

MR. KING.

The recovery of this veteran of the old School from his late alarming indiſpoſition, and his conſequent return to his profeſſional duty, muſt prove the ſource of conſiderable ſatisfaction and delight to every lover of legitimate dramatic performance. Mr. King has already appeared twice this ſeaſon, as *Sir Anthony Abſolute*, in the *Rivals*, and *Lord*

Ogleby, in the *Clandeſtine Marriage*. His ſuperior excellence in both theſe characters is ſo well known, and ſo univerſally acknowledged, that all comment becomes ſuperfluous. *Lord Ogleby* is, indeed, a part which no other actor on the ſtage is competent to ſuſtain but himſelf. And where ſhall we look for his equal, in *Sir Peter Teazle?*

MRS. BLAND.

After a long and juſtly regretted abſence from the ſtage, we had the pleaſure of hailing the return of this favorite actreſs to her profeſſional occupation, in the part of *Beda*, in *Colman's* Dramatic Romance of *Blue-Beard*. In the ballad line, as we have frequently had occaſion to remark, ſhe ſtands without a rival. Sweetneſs and ſimplicity, (the genuine requiſites for this walk) form the characteriſtics of her manner. To what cauſe it is owing, that the town has ſo long been deprived of her talents, after ſhe was publickly known to be perfectly recovered from her late afflicting malady, is a queſtion altogether problematical. Indeed we have our doubts, whether her talents would even now be placed in a ſtate of requiſition, if oppoſition in a certain quarter had not been over-ruled by the public voice. Miſs B. Menage, who has been *thruſt* into ſome of her characters, at the Haymarket-theatre, was *obtruded* upon us at Drury Lane, likewiſe, in the part of *Beda*. But what a poor ſubſtitute for our favorite Bland! She dances prettily, we grant, and the applauſe ſhe conſtantly received in the *Corſair*, at the Summer Theatre, has almoſt turned her giddy brain. But ſhe has neither voice, nor action—and her articulation is woefully indiſtinct. Mrs. Bland made her re-appearance in public, September, 29. That ſhe may long enjoy uninterrupted health and vigour, both bodily and mental, muſt be the ſincere wiſh of every admirer of genuine talent and profeſſional excellence.

COVENT

COVENT-GARDEN.

1801 SEPTEMBER.

Fryday, 25. Wild Oats, *O'Keefe*—The Farmer, *O'Keefe*.

Monday, 28. The Rival Queens; or Alexander the Great, *N. Lee*—Perouſe.

Wedneſday, 30. The Beaux Stratagem, *G. Farquhar*—Robin Hood, *Macnally*.

OCTOBER.

Friday, 2. The Suſpicious Huſband, *Dr. Hoadley*—Paul and Virginia, *Cobb*.

Saturday, 3. Artaxerxes, *Dr. Arne*—Barnaby Brittle.

Monday, 5. Romeo and Juliet, *Shakſpeare*—Perouſe.

Wedneſday, 7, Artaxerxes, *Dr. Arne*—The Jew and the Doctor *T. Dibdin*.

The narrow limits to which our critical remarks are neceſſarily confined this week, compel us to poſtpone our ſtrictures on the performance of *Romeo and Juliet*—which offers a wide field for diſquiſition—till a future repreſentation of that Play. At preſent, therefore, we ſhall only obſerve, that with one or two exceptions, at the head of which we juſtly rank MR. LEWIS's *Mercutio*—we never ſaw a Drama, throughout, ſo vilely got up. Neither did we ever witneſs ſo much liſtleſneſs and apathy, on the part of the audience, at a dramatic repreſentation. Indeed from the prevailing character of the performance, the audience appeared to be in doubt, whether they were regaled with *tragedy* or *farce!* We ſaw two new names in the Bills, which it is charity not to mention.

MR. LACEY.

Regardleſs of the ſalutary counſel which we gave in our him laſt Number, not to expoſe his imbecillity by vainly graſping at things beyond his reach, but rather to wait, till his wings are fledged before he attempts the Eagle's lofty flight, this aſpiring

ring hero ſtill ſeems determined to ſcale the ladder's topmoſt round, without gradual aſcent, and treading the intermediate ſteps. In addition to *Sir Philip Blandford*, in *Speed the Plough*, he has, ſince our laſt, ſucceeded to another of Mr. Pope's parts, as the repreſentative of *Alexander* the *Great*, in the Play of that name. Few if any of our readers, we preſume, are unaquainted with the nature and complexion of this character. Though we will not pretend to rank it among the higheſt and moſt difficult peſonifications in the whole range of the Drama, ſtill it requires a degree of vigour andve rſatility of talent far, very far, above the ordinary ſtandard. The abrupt tranſition from love to rage; from violence to tenderneſs; not to mention the impetuoſity of the mad ſcenes, call moſt imperiouſly for matured powers, and profeſſional experience to which Mr. Lacey has not the ſlighteſt, the remoteſt claim. His figure is woefully againſt him, and calculated for nothing but the repreſentation of the perturbed ghoſt of an undertaker! His look is either vacant, or diſpleaſing; either inexpreſſive, or gaſtly. He ſtands ill, and not erect upon his legs; his manner is devoid of fire and animation:—his delivery mechanical, ſtudied, monotonous and protracted. He ſpeaks not the language of the heart; but betrays labour, and a ſervile imitation of an actor, whoſe feelings alone, not his excellence, he has it in his power to copy and reſemble. The ſpectator no longer experiences the magic force of ſcenic deluſion; no longer identifies the repreſentation with reality, no longer fancies himſelf preſent at the tranſaction; but acknowledges his ſituation, and liſtens to the dialogue as a declamatory harangue; as a public recitation of an hiſtorical record. He liſtens with apathy; and pity for the ill ſucceſs of a fellow-being alone prevents him from revenging his diſappointment by indications of reſentment towards the performer. The only circumſtance, that operates in relief of Mr. Lacy, on this

this occaſion, and partially mitigates his doom is, that, with little exception, he was kept in countenance by the vileneſs of his aſſociates. The very *refuſe* of the company (we moſt particularly exempt the ladies from all implication in this charge were this evening preſt into the ſervice.

MRS. BEVERLY.

In the perſon of this lady, the Manager has added a uſeful and promiſing member to his company. She is the wife of Mr. Beverly, who made his *debut* laſt ſeaſon, at this theatre, in the part of *David*, in the *Rivals*; and ſiſter to Miſs Chapman, with whoſe name and merits the town have long been acquainted. Mrs. Beverly made her firſt appearance before a London audience, Wedneſday, September, 30. as *Chèrry*, in Farquhar's gay and luxuriant Comedy of the *Beaux Stratagem*. The part itſelf is but of a ſubordinate caſt; but the manner in which ſhe acquitted herſelf afforded fair evidence of capability for a ſuperior range. It is by playing ſmall parts well, that performers muſt hope, in the general practice and experience of the ſtage, to eſtabliſh their pretenſions to characters of greater weight and dignity. Mrs. Beverly has the advantages of a pleaſing figure, though not ſo tall as her ſiſter, and a very intereſting countenance. Her manner is ſprightly gay, and tinctured with a conſiderable degree of archneſs, which well accorded with the nature of the part. Her voice is clear, diſtinct, and capable of much inflexion, which cannot fail to prove of eminent ſervice to her in her profeſſional career. She poſſeſſes genuine unaffected humour, with no mean power of expreſſion. Though not a novice to the Stage, having, we underſtand been accuſtomed to provincial practice; yet for a firſt ap-, pearance before a London audience, we never ſaw a young performer diſplay a greater degree of eaſe and proper confidence. She was, throughout the whole of the repreſentation, totally *degagee* and unembarraſſed. As an actreſs, in the

the ſubordinate caſt of parts, which muſt conſtitute her perſent ſphere, we conſider her a valuable acquiſition to the theatre. And when culture and experience, ſhall come in aid of talents naturally good, improvement will follow as the neceſſary reſult.

Would room permit, we ſhould offer a few remarks on the manner, in which the Play, as to its general character, is got up at this houſe. Much as we have devoted our attention to ſcenic repreſentation, we have ſeldom, if ever, ſeen an old play go off with greater *eclat*, than did the *Beaux Stratagem* this Evening. Mr. Lewis's *Archer*, Munden's *Scrub*, and J. Johnſtone's *Father Foigard*, to which we may add Mrs. Glover's *Mrs Sullen*, proved objects of prominent attraction. Far is it from our wiſh to diſcourage merit,—however limited and ſubordinate but we cannot in juſtice, refrain from obſerving, that Mr, Brunton's *Lord Aimwell*, is, to ſay the leaſt, a very puerile effort. It wants the impoſing air, and conſcious dignity ſo eſſentially requiſite to give weight and pertinency to the character.

A ſpecific detail of *Artaxerxes*, as performed at both houſes, together with a *Critique* on the new Play of *Integrity*, produced on Thurſday night at Covent Garden, for the firſt time, in our next.

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